

What is claimed is:

1. An inflatable side protection airbag, said airbag comprising:

(a) a first panel, said first panel having an anterior portion and a posterior portion, said anterior and posterior portions being formed from a single piece of fabric, and

(b) a second panel, said second panel having an anterior portion, a posterior portion, and a bridging portion, said anterior and posterior portions being connected to one another by said bridging portion, said bridging portion lying adjacent a void area, said void area being positioned at least partially between said anterior portion and said posterior portion of said second panel, said second panel being formed from more than one cut pieces of fabric;

(c) wherein said anterior portion of said first panel is mated to said anterior portion of said second panel in forming a front pillow, and

(d) further wherein said posterior portion of said first panel is mated to said posterior portion of said second panel to form a back pillow.

2. The airbag of claim 1 wherein said bridging portion is inflatable, said bridging portion providing for air flow between said front pillow and said back pillow.

3. The airbag of claim 1 wherein said anterior portion of said second panel comprises a first piece of fabric, said posterior portion of said second panel comprises a second piece of fabric, and said bridging portion comprises a third piece of fabric.

4. The airbag of claim 1 wherein said first panel is comprised of more than one piece of fabric.

5. The airbag of claim 1 wherein said first panel is sewn to said second panel.

6. The airbag of claim 1 wherein the first and second panels are cut from at least one fabric blank, further wherein in the construction of said airbag, the ratio of (1) the amount of said fabric blank(s) which are actually employed in the airbag product as compared to (2) the total amount of said fabric blank(s), in square units, is greater than about 80 percent.

7. The airbag of claim 6 wherein said ratio is greater than about 90 percent.

8. The airbag of claim 1 wherein there is essentially no free space between said front pillow and said back pillow.

9. An inflatable airbag comprising:

(a) a unitary first panel, said first panel having an anterior portion, a posterior portion, and a linking portion, each of said anterior, posterior, and linking portions being formed from a single piece of fabric, said linking portion being positioned between said
5 anterior portion and said posterior portion; and

(b) a non-unitary second panel, said second panel having an anterior portion, a posterior portion, and a bridging portion, said anterior and posterior portions being connected to one another by said bridging portion, said bridging portion lying adjacent a void area, said void area being positioned at least partially between said anterior portion
10 and said posterior portions of said second panel, said second panel being formed from two or more pieces of fabric;

(c) wherein said anterior portion of said first panel is mated to said anterior portion of said second panel in forming a front pillow, and

(d) wherein said posterior portion of said unitary first panel is mated to said
15 posterior portion of said non-unitary second panel to form a back pillow; and

(e) wherein said linking portion of said unitary first panel is positioned opposite said void area of said non-unitary second panel; and

(f) wherein the space between said front pillow and said back pillow is substantially completely filled with fabric, and substantially free of clear space.

10. The airbag of claim 9 wherein said bridging portion provides continuity of air flow between said front pillow and said back pillow.

11. The airbag of claim **9** wherein said anterior portion of said second panel comprises a first piece of fabric, said posterior portion of said second panel comprises a second piece of fabric, and said bridging portion comprises a third piece of fabric.

12. The airbag of claim **9** wherein during the construction of said airbag there is essentially no fabric waste which corresponds to said void area of said non-unitary second panel.

13. The airbag of claim **9** wherein said first panel is sewn to said second panel.

14. The airbag of claim **9** wherein the first and second panels are cut from at least one fabric blank, further wherein in the construction of said airbag, the ratio of (1) the amount of said fabric blank(s) which are actually employed in the airbag product as compared to (2) the total amount of said fabric blank(s) employed for said construction, in square units, is greater than about 80 percent.

15. The airbag of claim **14** wherein said ratio is greater than about 90 percent.

16. The airbag of claim **9** wherein said non-unitary second panel is formed from at least three portions of cut fabric.

17. The airbag of claim **9** wherein said anterior portion of said unitary panel is adjacent said linking portion of said unitary panel, and said linking portion of said unitary panel lies adjacent said posterior portion of said unitary panel.

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18. The airbag of claim **9** wherein said unitary first panel comprises an inboard panel.

19. The airbag of claim **16** wherein said non-unitary second panel comprises an outboard panel.

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20. A method of making an airbag, comprising:

(a) providing a fabric blank,

(b) cutting at least a first portion(s) of fabric from said blank, wherein said first portion(s) corresponds to a first panel;

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(b) cutting from said fabric blank at least two additional portions;

(c) mating together said at least two additional portions, thereby forming a second panel; and

(d) mating said second panel to said first panel, thereby forming an inflatable fabric airbag.

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